



# Red



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## Chapter 1 by Brianna Citrigno

I always wondered what it would be like to see the colors. Red: anger, passion, war, desire. I always wanted something more, more than just red. More than just the color highlighting the faces of the embarrassed, decorating the injured. I knew there had to be a way.

We spoke of legends when we were younger. Stories of people who could see more than just a single color, people who could see all of them. We were jealous, but we knew they were just stories. I mean, seeing more than one color was absurd, right? Everyone only saw one color, that's just how it is. Are there more colors? Or do we all just see the same color and call it different things?

These stories. These legends. They tell of love, of heartbreak, of war. Stories of another past, some of another future. We keep them in locked rooms, lined up on shelves. We are told that they are just different legends. Liars, they're called. No one can see all the colors. In these stories, these tales of lies, they see all the colors.

All I see is Red.

I met someone, who said they did not see red. They said they saw something called blue. I showed them a flower, a red flower. They did not respond they said it was gray, not red. They showed me "blue", but it was just gray. Are we lying to each other?

Curiosity killed the cat, as the saying goes. However, what if blue is not red. What if we weren't lying? I asked them what they thought blue was like. They said it is the color of the sky, of peace, tranquility, but also the color of sadness, loneliness. The passion in their eyes, the slight red in their cheeks told me that it was not a lie.

I needed to know how to see this color. I had to know what blue looked like. I must know what

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the sky, of peace, tranquility... the sky. I continued walking; it would be weird to look at something that appeared gray. I continued walking along the desolate path.

Growing tired, I longed for the comfort of a bench, however I settled for the same gray border that guarded a building. I checked my watch again, 7:00. It is the color of the sky, the voice said with more urgency this time. Of peace, tranquility, it continued. What harm would it be to look up at the sky, it shouldn't be anything different. It was early evening so it should be gray with red stripes. I looked up, gray with red stripes, just like I thought. They are a liar, the sky is gray. They lied, just like the stories.

I grew angry with myself, my color tinting the sides of my vision, removing some of the monochrome's beauty. I stood up abruptly, frustrated as I walked to my gray apartment. I began to pace myself, no use in destroying everything in there.

I stopped when I saw the broken fence. Mangled and destroyed, wires poking at me in every known angle. Why would someone go to such lengths to hide something? The voice told me. Aren't you curious?

Giving in, I pushed my way through the hole and was greeted by dirty windows and broken glass. Carefully trotting my way inside the abandoned building, I realized where I was.

The building of stories, legends. The building created by liars, for liars. I saw the lies stacked neatly on the shelves, all little white lies. They were not hurting anyone, the lies. The voice reprimanded. Pick it up, what is the harm. Read the lies, you know they are not real. What can they do to you?

The incessant racket inside my head would not stop. In an attempt to calm the storm inside, I took some with me and brought them to my apartment. They had words inside; eloquently written in a color everyone could see. How were they so bad, they were just stories, legends, made up by someone's imagination?

From that day on, I took more and more of them home. I read more and more until I could no longer keep my eyes open during the day. The final story I took home with me, it was red on the outside with several shades of gray conflicting with it. It told the story of the true essence of color, and I was intrigued.

I met others, others that saw different colors. We addressed each other as the colors, too, out

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doorbell rang.

Slowly the colors trickled into the room like water on a window. We began to share stories on what we saw. I told everyone to stay seated and to follow me into a room one at a time when I told them I was ready. I prepared the surprise in the next room over and I wanted to share this experience with them. I was so excited, the lies on the shelf told me so much on how color worked that I had to let them be a part of the magic too.

First Orange came into the room, enthusiasm abound. Then yellow, immense happiness metamorphosing as they entered the room. Followed by Green, whose cheery demeanor transformed at the surprise. Purple, regal as always was taken aback when they saw the creation. Blue, my oldest friend amongst the colors, simply cried at what I had created. I finally knew what I had been missing. All I was missing now was blue.

Blue saw gray, while I saw the red of what I had created. My eyes began to sting when I saw what I had done. Tears threatened to spill over as I showed blue what I had shown the others. Blue was now speechless, and the tears, they flowed down my face slowly.

I saw. I saw it all. I saw the red, the orange, the yellow, the green, and the purple. However, most importantly, I saw the blue, I felt it. I had ended the colors, so that I could see them in a new way. Was it worth it? Was I selfish, greedy? Of course. Now I knew that the building of lies was the truth. However, in order to see the spectrum, I had to sacrifice it. I killed them so that I could see. I was blind but because of their sacrifice, for me, I could see.

I looked down at my feet. I saw the colors' colors. I whispered my gratitude to them as I walked away into a brave new world.

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